DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 450 900 PS 029 242

AUTHOR Greig, Liz
TITLE Supporting Development and Learning 3-5. Early Education Support Series.
INSTITUTION Learning and Teaching Scotland, Dundee.
ISBN ISBN-1-85955-736-8
PUB DATE 2001-00-00
NOTE 40p.; For related guides, see PS 028 472-473 and PS 029 234-243.
AVAILABLE FROM Sales Department, Learning and Teaching Scotland, Gardyne Road, Dundee DD5 1NY, Scotland; Tel: 01382-443600; Fax: 01382-443645/6; e-mail: enquiries@LTScotland.com; Web site: http://www.LTScotland.com (Order code: JFK, 3.50 British Pounds Sterling plus 2.50 shipping).
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Adjustment (to Environment); *Child Development; Childhood Needs; Developmental Stages; Emotional Development; Foreign Countries; Grouping (Instructional Purposes); *Individual Differences; Personality; Preschool Children; *Preschool Education; Self Concept; Social Development; Student Interests; Teacher Student Relationship
IDENTIFIERS Scotland

ABSTRACT

Based on the view that children cannot and should not be categorized into chronological age groups, this guide focuses on children's personal, social, and emotional development and dispositions. The guide encourages educators in early years settings in Scotland to view each child as an individual and to be prepared for the less developmentally mature child and to adjust the atmosphere, rhythm, and daily practices of the center when necessary to support the needs of children at different stages of development. Section 1 of the guide notes that when children come into a new environment, they need time to "settle in," and that throughout the year, as younger children enter early years settings, the rhythm and pace of the setting needs to be redefined to accommodate them as they settle into the established routine. Section 2, comprising the bulk of the book, describes the competencies, needs, and rights of the developing child and discusses four areas of development: personal or self, social, emotional, and dispositions or interests. Examples of children in early years settings are presented, along with questions and suggestions for teachers and for teams related to educational practice. Section 3 focuses on how educators can support children who are developmentally mature and settled into the routine while also supporting those who are exploring a new environment. Section 4 provides topics for early years team discussion regarding the center and day-to-day practices. Lists 12 titles for further reading. (KB)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 450 900

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

EARLY EDUCATION SUPPORT

# Supporting Development and Learning 3–5

PS 029242

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Tegwen R. Wallace

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

Learning Teaching Scotland

# Supporting Development and Learning 3–5

Liz Greig

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank:

- the children, the parents, Wendy Jelfs and the team at Hawkhill Nursery, Clackmannan, for sharing their experiences with us and allowing us to take snapshots of a morning in Hawkhill Nursery
- the members of the Early Years Reference Group for their critical review of the document within the Early Years Support Series
- Diane Alexander, Development Fellow, Scottish CCC (now Learning and Teaching Scotland) for her continuing encouragement and support
- the undernoted people, who found the time in their busy lives to comment on the content and structure of this document.

| | |
|---|---|
| Frances Anderson | Scottish Pre-school Play Association |
| Helen Budge | Assistant Adviser Pre-school, Shetland Islands |
| Margaret Cameron | Headteacher, Coupar Angus Primary School, Coupar Angus, Perth and Kinross Council |
| Wendy Davidson | Lecturer, Early Education, Northern College, Dundee |
| Liz Gillies | Senior Lecturer, Northern College, Dundee |
| Sandra Gray | Adviser, Early Education, Shetland Islands |
| Wendy Jelfs and her team | Hawkhill Nursery, Clackmannan |
| Gillian Mailer | Nursery Teacher, Kinross Primary, Perth and Kinross Council |
| Liz Rose | Early Years Support Officer, Falkirk Council |
| Bill Thomson | Early and Primary Education Pathway Director, Northern College, Aberdeen |
| Pat Wharton | Principal Officer, Early Childhood, Stirling Council |
| Christina Wotherspoon and her team | St Brides Primary School, Cowdenbeath, Fife Council |

Everyone offered support, constructive comments and ideas, which have now found their way into the document.

The comments and balance of views from a range of early education professionals across Scotland, in different councils and professional settings, enabled the rethinking and refining of the document to take place. Their valuable and much appreciated viewpoints have contributed to the making of this document, which offers support to all educators concerned with the development and learning of the young child.

First published 2001

© Learning and Teaching Scotland 2001

ISBN 1 85955 736 8

# CONTENTS

Section One: Setting the Scene 1

Section Two: The Developing Child 3

Section Three: Concluding Comments 30

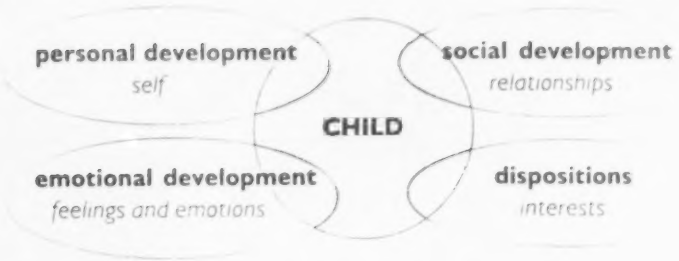
Section Four: Where are You Now? 32

Further Reading 34

# SECTION ONE: SETTING THE SCENE

*While young children need an environment that balances familiar and predictable routines with challenge and surprises, their confidence in coping with new experiences needs to be supported by adults who offer emotional support, praise and encouragement.*

*A Curriculum Framework for Children 3 to 5*,
Scottish CCC, 1999




This document is written to support educators working with children 3–5 at a time when changes are taking place in early childhood settings, and specifically when some educators are adjusting to the realities of younger children being in their settings. As there is no typical three-year-old, a conscious decision was taken that this document would not focus on a group of children 'classed' as three-year-olds.

This document is underpinned by the belief that children cannot and should not be categorised into chronological age groups. As educators of young children know, a child who is 36 months old may be developmentally younger or older and most likely will not be as advanced in all areas of development or learning.

Each child is an individual who deserves to be valued for what he is and what he brings, and should not be seen as a three- or four-year-old who fits into an organisational category.

When children come into a new environment, they need time to settle into the centre, make new friends, watch and look, and become attached to new adults and adjust to new routines.

They need familiar materials in sheltered places where they can play and watch and listen. They need to feel comfortable to wander round, look and not join in. During the settling-in time, materials are more like transitional objects, something to touch and hold while looking and deciding if this setting is going to be a safe, secure and comforting place to be in each day.

Children will need these familiar materials to which they can return day after day until they are ready to move out and into other activities either alone or with their new-found friends. For some children this will take longer than for others.

Educators must support this settling-in process and not become anxious if some children are not seen to be using the materials as they had planned or are not using all the areas in the setting. Sometimes there can be too many areas and materials for children to choose from. What is needed is a balance between the familiar and the new that offers each child a comfortable challenge.

As younger children enter settings, at different times in the year, the rhythm and pace of the setting will need to be redefined to accommodate the children as they settle into what is an established routine.

Those children already familiar with the setting will also need to be supported in accepting their new companions and some of the changes and interruptions this may bring to the routine and to their play and groupings. On reflection, it may be true to say that some of the children will be used to younger siblings at home and at toddler clubs or tumble tots and may be more comfortable with their new companions than the educators. Even so, the children will need support, especially when their play is disrupted. Roles and routines of educators may need to be adjusted to give the support needed to the different groups of children.

The focus of this document is the child's **personal, social and emotional development and dispositions**

First and foremost, each child needs to be understood as a person before and alongside being a learner.

Central to the child's response to the cognitive, physical, expressive and aesthetic areas of development and learning is his personal, social and emotional development. This will be at the heart of any setting that cares for and educates young children. For every child coming into a setting, the development of this key aspect will affect his response to the curriculum that is being offered. This will in turn affect the educator's response to the child, involving the educator in:

> *negotiating the balance between the younger child's struggle to achieve independence and their need for ongoing emotional support*
>
> *A Curriculum Framework for Children 3 to 5*, Scottish CCC, 1999

# SECTION TWO: THE DEVELOPING CHILD

> *Children are individuals. They share much with one another, yet each child has a combination of skills, interests, experiences, feelings and attitudes that will never be repeated as a whole in any other child.*
>
> Lindon, J., *Child Development from Birth to Eight: A Practical Focus*, London: National Children's Bureau, 1993

The young child is growing and developing as a person.

A child is a person – an individual who has:

- a personality, will and spirit
- qualities
- strengths
- motivation
- life experiences
- expectations
- needs
- wants
- rights and entitlements.

The young child is finding his way in a world that is new, strange and enticing and in which he has lots of exploring and enquiring to do to discover what phenomena this world holds.

For some children their world can be frightening.

Each child is entitled to:

- an environment that:
  - fosters and develops the desire and intrinsic motivation to enquire and make sense of experiences and discoveries
  - supports and extends a child's natural curiosity, intellectual concerns and schematic development
  - allows for the will and spirit to 'flourish'
  - feels safe and secure

- educators who:
  - have the same desire to enquire and make sense
  - can share in each child's discoveries with a freshness and surprise
  - celebrate with the child the excitement of discovery
  - share the sadness and frustrations of life that present the unknown, the inexplicable and which are sometimes upsetting
  - provide opportunities for the child to work through and express feelings and emotions
  - give support when the child expresses feelings and emotions because of upsets like changes in routines and plans
  - provide role models for the child

- through honest, supportive relationships will help him to learn to cope with changes and challenges.

Children today need to:

> *adjust to a high degree of complexity and diversity as well as to continuous changes.*
>
> Dahlberg, G., Moss, P. and Pence, A., *Beyond Quality in Early Education and Care: Postmodern Perspectives*, London: Falmer Press, 1999

For example:

- **how the child feels about himself** will affect how he approaches any activities that he is involved in that day, whether it is looking at books or playing with water or sitting in a group for a game or a story
- **how a child responds to** and **copes with a group situation** will affect his concentration and his ability to settle and focus attention
- **how the child relates to adults** and **other children** will affect how he joins in imaginative play or physical play
- **how the child reacts to home situations**, for example the birth of a baby or moving house, will affect his behaviour in the setting.

The developing child must be central to the thinking of the educators as they make decisions about the:

- balance of opportunities available
- approaches to the curriculum
- organisation of space, layout and time inside and outside
- materials that are available.

This must also apply as they make decisions about:

- how they will respond to each child's engagement with the 'curriculum'
- the type of environment that will motivate and offer both security and challenge to individuals
- the focus of interactions with each child
- what is being monitored through planned and incidental observations.

Both parents and educators need to ask themselves questions about child development. The watchful and enquiring adult will wonder at times about the pace of a child's development or be surprised by a child's response because the reaction is not what was expected. Does this mean there is a norm?

There are questions that parents and educators need to consider.

- Is there one model of 'a developing child'?
- Do all children develop at the same rate?

Lindon suggests that it is better to talk about shared stages of development rather than 'normal' development but points out:

> *As much as children share similar stages in development, you still have to look at any individual child as a unique person.*
>
> Lindon, J., *Child Development from Birth to Eight: A Practical Focus*, London: National Children's Bureau, 1993

## Are you sometimes surprised by what the young child can do?

*Rosie puts up the ironing board, spreads out the doll's matinee jacket and irons it. Then she puts the board away and seeks out an adult to help her hold the doll while she dresses the doll, everything going on correctly and in the correct order. All communication is by look and touch with not a word spoken.*

Rosie is a competent and knowledgeable child, who is using skills she has learned from watching and modelling behaviour seen at home. She is using strategies to get the support she needs to be able to get her baby ready to go out for a walk in the pram. Rosie could be three, four, five or older. Does her age matter?

What matters is that she has gained knowledge through modelling, is being supported in her own play with dolls and is encouraged to practise and develop her skills. In this setting she is encouraged to follow through her interests and show others what she knows and can do with great competence. What is important for the educators is that they enable her to pursue her interests, letting her feel at home with what she knows about and feels comfortable with in her understanding of life.

Hurst and Joseph[1] write about a developmentally appropriate curriculum, which they describe as a curriculum that is shaped around the child's stage of development. The curriculum responds to the interests and knowledge that the child has gained from the experiences in the home and community. This type of curriculum:

- needs educators who have up-to-date knowledge, understanding and skills
- helps children develop positive attitudes and behaviour as social beings and learners.

Have you seen the BBC video, *Tuning into Children*?

---

Hurst, V. and Joseph, J., *Supporting Early Learning: The Way Forward*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1998

If you have, you will have seen Natacha, a four-year-old girl who, you are told, has spent a lot of time baking at home with her grandmother.

What would you expect to see?

You will see Natacha showing the skills and knowledge she has as a baker, learned through modelling and practice with a familiar adult.

You may have been intrigued by the way she organises and handles the utensils, cracks an egg with a fork, spoons out the flour and the sugar, and stirs the ingredients together. She knows to draw round the tin to make a base for the tin from greaseproof paper and ably cuts out the round shape and places it in the bottom of the baking tin. The cake mix is carefully spooned into the tin and spread across with a spatula.

Are these the expectations you would have of a four-year-old, an older child or an adult?

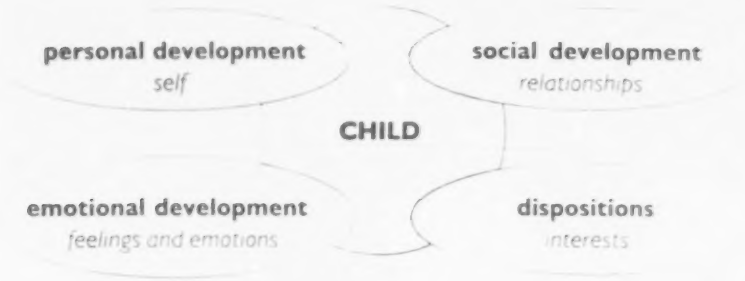
Natacha shows what she can do because she has had the experience many times and has been allowed to practise and learn through trying and doing. The fact that she is four years old is not the overriding consideration.

Have you considered whether thinking of a child's age limits the expectations you may have of the child?

What do you think?

When observing your children would it be better to forget about their age and think about them as Sam or Ben or Lei Shin?

Is it better to think of them as individuals with unique life stories, experiences, preferences and motivations?




The four areas of development shown below will be the focus of this document.

### Personal development

When we think about personal development in the young child we are concerned with the child's:

- awareness of self and his self-help skills
- self-image and feelings of self-worth and self-esteem
- confidence
- ability to take responsibility.

### Social development

When we think of social development we are concerned with the young child who is:

- developing an awareness of others and learning how to:
  - decentre from self, becoming less egocentric
  - form relationships
  - be part of a group.

### Emotional development

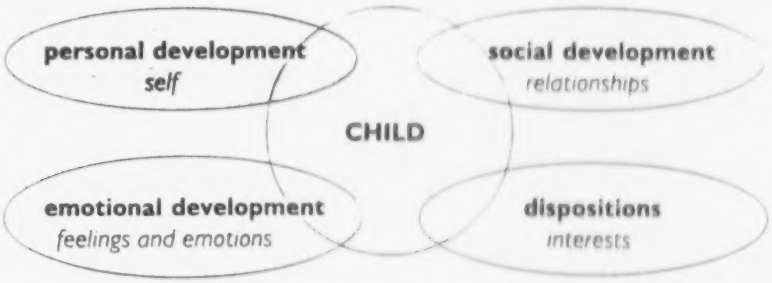
When we think of emotional development we are concerned with the young child who:

- has feelings and emotions
- needs to feel secure in self and with others
- needs to detach and form new attachments with new people
- needs time to be alone and be who he wants to be.

### Dispositions

When we think of dispositions we are concerned about what the young child consistently demonstrates. This includes:

- interests
- 'intellectual concerns'; that is wanting to know more about the use of materials and resources with which he is confident and to which he returns
- attitudes to self and others.




## Personal development

Personal development in the young child concerns the child's:

- awareness of self and his self-help skills
- self-image and feelings of self-worth
- self-esteem
- confidence
- ability to take responsibility.

The above points will be considered in two parts: the first three and then the remaining two.

**Have you considered the following questions?**

- How do you know when a child is aware of self?
- How do you know what a child feels about himself or herself?
- How does a child show how he feels?
- Do children have high or low self-esteem or does it fluctuate?

Roberts[2] supports the view that babies and young children need to be 'accepted without reservation and without judgement' by their important people. This is described as 'unconditional positive regard'.

When a child is settling into a new setting, he is going to make new attachments to whoever is his significant adult.

He is going through a process of detachment for a short while from his parent/carer to then bond with another adult or adults. Making new attachments includes making bonds with peers who may become very significant. In this bonding and attachment process, the child needs to be given this 'unconditional positive regard'. Part of this bonding and attachment is the young child learning *how to be acceptable* to the significant people around him. Is this why many young children do a lot of watching when they are settling in or when visitors come to a setting? The bonding and attachment processes will have an effect on a child's self-concept. A young child will react to the responses given by the chosen

[2] Roberts, R., *Self-esteem and Successful Early Learning*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1995

significant adult because no-one is immune to comments or judgements about himself.[3]

- How does a child receive communications about himself?
- How does he feel when he receives these judgements?
- How does he show his feelings?

A young child has feelings and emotions. A young child can read expressions and can make judgements from the tone of voice, the choice of phrase, the way the words are said, the choice of words (which might mean something different to the child) and the body language.

For example, the child who, for some reason, is crying loudly cries even more as the adult takes his hand, walks quickly along the road and is heard to say: 'You do not need to cry. You are being silly. Sh! That's enough! Sh!' But the crying goes on even more loudly because a child senses the tone of voice and a lack of comfort in the voice and body language. A young child also expects consistency between words and body language and if he receives mixed messages then he becomes confused and can be upset.

***Young children use body language to check if they are acceptable and unfortunately they sometimes find that spoken and body language are not consistent.***[4]

The young child builds up a picture of himself and, from the reactions of others to him, creates a self-concept. This self-concept is the child's perception of himself and what he believes about himself.

Roberts[5] suggests that each time someone makes a judgement about a child then another feature is added to the child's internal picture of who he is. This belief has come from the way in which others have shown their *unconditional* or *conditional* acceptance of the child.

[3] Roberts, R., *Self-esteem and Successful Early Learning*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1995.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*

Ben comes into playgroup with a confident step, running ahead of Gran, with a smile and a determined look on his face. He struggles to take off his coat and change his shoes because he is desperate to be at the climbing frame before his friends. He was a fireman yesterday and has come with a plan to make the climbing frame into a building being burnt down. He says a quick 'good-bye' to Gran and dashes off calling: 'I'm away to get my hoses.'

His friend, Mark, arrives a few minutes later and Ben rushes to Mark: 'Come on, come on! We'll get the house ready for Paul and Tom coming!'

**What might this tell you about Ben?**

- He is confident and happy – secure in his setting.
- He is happy to part from Gran.
- He has developed his fine motor-skills to be able to get his coat off and his shoes changed.
- He can plan ahead and think through how he wants to continue his play from yesterday.
- He is content and happy to be with his friend.
- He is secure in this friendship.
- This scenario suggests that Ben is aware of self: he has a strong feeling of self-worth.
- His self-perception is that he is valued by his friends/playmates and this helps him to feel good about himself.
- This also tells you he feels safe and secure in the relationships he has with the educators in the playgroup.

'Hello Keiran, how are you today?' Keiran looks at Nancy, his childminder, and says: 'Poodle my puppy is with me today. He was lonely this morning.'

'Good, we can play with Poodle. Will Poodle want to hear your favourite story when you have your snack?'

Keiran looks at Dad and, with a nod of reassurance from Dad, takes off his coat, waves 'bye-bye' to Dad and carries Poodle into the kitchen. They sit together at the table, where Keiran gets his juice. Nancy, sensing the insecurity in Keiran and, having had a quiet word with Dad, asks if Poodle would like juice too. Poodle has some juice from a little cup.

Poodle goes wherever Keiran goes that morning. He is happy and content in his play and in his interaction with Nancy and with Kim, who comes every day too.

**What might this tell you about Keiran and his childminder?**

- Nancy recognised that Keiran had a need for a friend or a transitional object that day and involved Poodle in the activities.
- Poodle, with his long furry ears, seemed to give Keiran comfort, as he was seen to be stroking them quite often.
- Nancy was showing Keiran that she was valuing him and his needs – she was respecting the importance and significance of this prop.

Many children need a prop or a support to help them feel safe and secure and also confident to go somewhere different.

Emotions and feelings need to be expressed in a safe and respectful environment so that emotions do not become barriers to development and learning.

Marie comes into nursery, head down with a sad, unhappy look on her face. Mum does not look happy either and looks to the nursery nurse welcoming the children that day, as if she is saying: 'Please take her from me because I am not coping too well with this today.'

Mum helps Marie with her coat but Marie still keeps her head down. Mum says 'bye-bye' and tells her to be a good girl adding: 'You will need to smile if you want Amy to play with you.' Marie looks at Mum walking away and, with head down, goes across to the house and finds a doll, which she takes with her for the rest of the morning.

**What might this tell you about Marie?**

- She is not very happy and something is concerning her.
- She does not cry but she shows her unhappiness.
- She copes with it by walking away from Mum and goes for the one thing which gives her a feeling of security – a doll.

Marie needs what Elfer[6] describes as a 'secure base'; this will be provided instinctively and automatically by many educators.

Marie seemed to be showing that she had already understood about being acceptable. What we are not sure about is whether Marie could have taken her own coat off – has she developed her physical self-help skills? Also, will Marie do as Mum said so that Amy will accept her and play with her, or will she just ignore the condition that had been placed on Amy accepting her into her play? Will she lose her pain, her fear or her dismay?

***The child's developing self-perception is inextricably linked with learning to be acceptable, but being acceptable sometimes means not showing pain, fear or anger*** [7]

Have you tried:

- having sheltered spaces for children like Marie to be on her own in for a little while, with her doll – her comforter?
- having a special space for a child to be with an adult to play quietly in, or to draw, or look at a favourite book or talk?
- using books as a time to share feelings?
- telling stories about yourself as a child or about a make-believe child feeling unhappy?

**As a team have you thought about** some of the statements you make and the phrases you use when talking to the children? For example:

- positive statements such as:
  - 'well done'
  - 'superb'
- positive conditional statements such as:
  - 'a big thank you for collecting all those books for me'
- negative statements such as:
  - 'You will never ...'
  - 'You cannot ...'.

**As a team, do you support the children** by expressing praise and giving positive support to each other. For example, one of Kate's first words was 'jaboolus', said with great feeling when she saw Kirsty climb the chute unaided.

Kate noted the significant achievement, as did the educator near-by. Kate

[6] Elfer, P. 'Building Intimacy in Relationships with Young Children in Nurseries', *Early Years*, 16(2), (spring) 1996

[7] Roberts, R., *Self-esteem and Successful Early Learning*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1995

was following the role model and expressed her delight when she saw her friend's success.

**As a team, do you have strategies** in place to support:

- a child like Marie when she comes into your setting?
- the parent/carer when she/he is not coping or comfortable with the child's response to whatever is happening that day?

It is sometimes natural for educators to concentrate on the child and forget the parent when often, in fact, helping the parent helps the child.

> ***Educators should provide a secure environment where children have the courage to attempt new things and are given time, interest and positive responses from adults who have ensured that the environment offers safe but challenging opportunities. In these circumstances, children will not only learn what they can do but will know it is safe and all right to keep on finding out what more they can do.***[8]

Personal development in the young child concerns the child's *confidence* and *readiness to take responsibility*.

**Have you considered the following questions?**

- When would you and your team say a child is confident?
- What are the signs of someone being genuinely confident?
- Could you at times misinterpret a child's confidence?
- If children are given responsibility will this develop their confidence?
- If children are encouraged to take responsibility will this increase their confidence?
- Do educators sometimes underestimate the child's ability to take responsibility? If they do, does this then undermine the child's confidence?

It might be helpful to consider this next thought. If children are free to construct their own rules and negotiate shared rules that are fair and just and based on 'health and safety' issues, then a shared understanding and expectation is reached. Adults and rules are not then barriers to learning but gateways to discovery.

Renowden[9] believes that the child whose creative growth has been fostered develops:

- confidence in his own personal achievements
- confidence to explore, experiment and believe that most things are possible
- ongoing curiosity

---

[8] Griffin, B., 'The child should feel good enough: nurturing a sense of self in young children', chapter 2 in Abbott, L. and Moylett, H., *Working with the under 3s: responding to children's needs*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1997

[9] Renowden, H., 'It's a princess – fostering creative development and aesthetic development in young children', Chapter 6 in Abbot, L. and Moylett, H., *Working with the under 3s: responding to children's needs*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1997



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

- confidence in verbalising his own thoughts and in expressing ideas and opinions, and the belief that these are of value.

The young child will show this confidence through his representations.

> Simon is standing, looking in at the group, which is busy cutting and sticking. He watches, thumb in mouth. Matthew walks over to Simon to show him his picture, takes his hand and leads him to the table to cut, glue and stick. Simon steps back, head down, but sneaking a look when he thinks no-one can see him. Matthew chats away while he begins to make another picture. Simon watches, looks at the educator, watches Matthew, and follows him to put the picture in the worktop.

**What does this tell you about Simon and Matthew?**

**Simon:**

- is shy
- is not sure of new situations or of getting in a mess
- lacks confidence
- may not have the necessary physical skills
- seeks reassurance
- is unsure of self
- is becoming more confident
- is beginning to form a relationship with Matthew
- is unsure of how he is seen by others; that is, he is unsure of his self-worth, self-image and self-perception.

**Matthew:**

- is sensitive to other children
- is pro-social and empathetic
- uses non-verbal strategies to involve another peer
- is a skilful communicator
- is aware of self
- takes on responsibility
- has had practice to develop fine-motor skills and be self-sufficient.

Some young children need to know they have permission to do certain things, especially if the rules are different from home.

**Have you tried:**

- allowing children to have their own drawer or box to keep their belongings in?
- having little pigeon-hole boxes for children to look into and to keep something special in?
- making all resources that are in use accessible to all children?
- giving children responsibility for mixing their own paints, with or without following simple picture instructions?

- having activities that children can do, following picture instructions if necessary?
- letting the children make the choices about what is put out in the setting each day?
- giving children access to both outdoors and indoors each day?
- helping parents/carers see that children can get dressed and undressed and encouraging them to stand back and not assist unless really necessary?
- helping parents/carers reflect on the reasons for having easily fastened clothing and footwear to promote independence?
- encouraging children to group and to be responsible for a new child at snack-time for example?
- accepting that, on some days, a child may wish to be alone and play in parallel with his friends?

Remember:

- if children are not given responsibility then they will not be able to take responsibility
- taking responsibility for self and others is a life-skill.

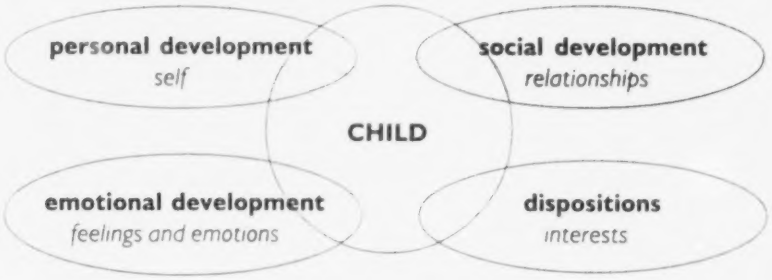
**Discussion for teams**

As a team:

- discuss self-concept and self-esteem
  - how do you identify a child's level of self-esteem? Self-esteem can be high or low and can fluctuate between the two
  - how do you support the children at present?
- think about the statements or phrases you use when you are interacting with children
- identify how and when you give children responsibility and how the amount of responsibility you give relates to the age of the child (or not).



BEST COPY AVAILABLE




## Social development

Social development is concerned with how a young, pro-social child learns to:

- decentre from self to others
- form relationships
- be part of a group.

Have you thought about the following questions?

- How and when does the young child decentre from self (me)?
- When does the young child think of others?
- How does a child learn to form relationships?
- How and when does a child become part of a group?
- How does a child know what to do to become part of a group?

Imagine what it feels like to be in a new environment where you do not know people, where people's body language says 'do not intrude into my space', or where people are over-chatty or not chatty and you are not comfortable with this.

Could an early childhood setting feel like that for the child who:

- is new to the setting?
- is not comfortable yet with too many people around?
- is upset at the change of routine?
- loves company and wants everyone to join in?

Yes it could, because a young child is no different from an adult.

***By age three and four, children are more able to behave in line with the adults' views of good behaviour. Three-year-olds are more able to play together and resolve some of the difficulties that arise. They can and are willing to cooperate and may enjoy helping others. They have some sensitivity to the feelings of others.***[16]

Do educators have expectations of when a child 'should be' ready to decentre? Decentering does not just happen, nor should it be an expectation that it should happen by a set day or age.

The young child is naturally going to focus on himself, especially when he is settling into an environment that is new and different. A young child who is

[16] Lindon, J., *Working with Young Children*, 3rd edn, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1997





BEST COPY AVAILABLE

an only child may be quite self-centred if he has not had much opportunity to be with other children for any regular length of time.

Even when a child is settled he is still going to think about himself. Adults do this too, do they not? Sometimes adults do this for self-preservation. Sometimes adults put up barriers because they do not want, and cannot handle, intrusion into their world. The young child should be allowed to do the same.

Sometimes a child needs to be alone and should be allowed to play alone or alongside others. Educators need to monitor this and to check out a child's reactions to then help the child move forward when he is ready.

Sometimes a child's self-centred behaviour is about being uncomfortable with the routines of the setting. For example: 'When is snack?', 'What do I do?' or 'When do we go to the big hall?'

The young child needs sensitive support in taking on the unfamiliar experience. He needs support to think about others and to accommodate the interests of others in his own world.

**Current thinking**

Studies of the social behaviour of babies and the young child by Eisenberg support the need for social experiences that are matched to a child's developmental needs. Einsenberg feels that if a child's interests are respected then they feel 'respect worthy'. Given this, they will then respect other children's interests and will be more willing to share in them.

> *They will be developing the self discipline which enables them to put off their concerns for a while in order to accommodate the differing intentions of their friends.*
>
> Eisenberg, N., *The Caring Child*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992

Eisenberg found that young children can give comforting behaviour, but that as children move towards pre-school age they are more likely to comfort a family member than peers. Eisenberg also found that the young child will be more supportive of those he plays with most and will share with and help those who tend to share with and help him.

> Amy, Sam and Paula are playing at the sand-tray, individually but in parallel. Amy is filling up the dumper truck with sand, emptying it and filling it, emptying it and filling it ...
>
> Sam comes along and starts to fill the dumper truck alongside Amy. Amy does not like this, glowers at him and then pushes

his spade away and says: 'Mine.' Sam continues to add in sand, saying to Amy: 'I want to play too.'

Paula then decides to join in too. Amy gets very upset, shouting: 'Mine, mine, go away!'

Sam and Paula move away to the other end of the tray and begin to fill up the sand bucket, talking, laughing and making sand pies but finding out that they all 'fall down'.

**What does this tell you about Amy, Sam and Paula?**
This scenario tells you that:

- Amy, on this occasion, is happy to be on her own filling the dumper truck
- Amy is not quite ready to have others intrude into her play
- Amy is concerned with *herself* and either does not want others to join in her play scenario or is happy working on her own curriculum
- Amy is still self-centred
- Amy is not ready to decentre
- Sam wants to make relationships and tries a strategy that will let him in to share with Amy
- when Sam realises he is not welcome he retreats from the potential conflict, finds a new playmate and moves to the other end of the sand-tray
- Paula probably did not want to be left on her own and decides to move in on the play. She sees this has not been successful and moves away, but has Sam with her
- Paula and Sam support each other when moving away from Amy
- Paula and Sam also need the support of an educator to help them understand about sand pies and dry sand.

This is a scenario you will have seen often; it is part of each child's development. To help a young child to move forward, educators need to support sensitively and help him to have self-reported motives for doing something.

Consider the following examples.

Robert gave Dan some of his crackers during snack-time. His reason when asked was: 'He's hungry.' (This is called a needs-orientated justification.)

David went over and wiped the table after Aaron had asked him to help with the task. When asked why he did so, the reason given was: 'I wiped the table because it was wet.' (This is called pragmatic reasoning.)

A young child will be helped to enter into a group and to become part of a group if the environment is socially constructed and the educators are sensitive to and aware of the developmental stages in pro-social behaviour.

Have you tried:

- reviewing the layout and the organisation of space in the room?
- giving children more space by not having as many contexts in a room?
- having spaces for one or two, where a child can be alone but also see out and play alongside others if need be?
- having open access to the outdoor area with its varied and rich contexts for learning?
- providing sheltering and a size of space that limits the numbers who can squeeze into the space?
- providing shelter through which both the child and educator can see?
- thinking about the climbing frame as being a meeting place that encourages socialising?
- thinking about why you have a story time or together time with groups that are too large?
- thinking about having groups of three or four, so that all members of the group can have an intimacy with the educator?
- playing games in which children learn more about sharing; for example:
  - at snack-time, someone holds the plate of cakes so that everyone can take one?
  - sharing the bricks so that each child can build a tower and then take turns to knock it down?
  - waiting for the egg-timer to run through? It will then be the next person's turn on the rocking horse.

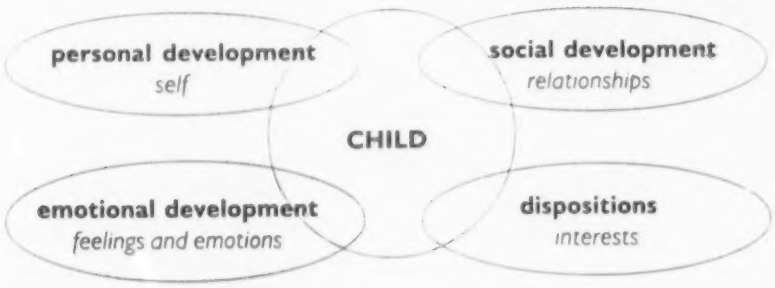
Lindon[11] points out that 'if children are tired, ill or at the end of a hard day then they will not be on their best behaviour and will need comfort, not annoyance, from parents or carers'. She reminds us that 'adults, although capable of patience, altruism, cooperation or courtesy, do not behave like that all the time, so do not expect standards from children that you know are met by very few adults'.

### Discussion for teams

As a team, discuss:

- how you help children settle and become part of a group
- the ways in which the layout of the setting supports social development
- how the routine of the day may affect children's social behaviour
- the strategies already in place, and decide on others that may be worth considering
- the access and space you give children inside and outside to move about in and to develop and socialise in.

[11] Lindon, J., *Working with Young Children*, 3rd edn, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1997




## Emotional development

Emotional development is concerned with the young child, who:

- has feelings and emotions
- needs to feel secure in self and with others
- needs to detach and form new attachments with new people
- needs time to be alone and be who he or she wants to be.

**Have you considered the following questions?**

What must it feel like for the child when:

- he is going on holiday to a caravan for the first time and he desperately wants to tell the adults in the nursery?
- he is getting a pet rabbit from his grandad?
- Gran is coming to visit the nursery?
- the main carer is ill in bed and not able to take him to playgroup, for example?
- Mum goes into hospital for an operation?
- the main carer is not in a good mood in the morning and everything the child does is 'wrong' and annoying to the adult?
- a pet animal is very ill and is put down, and is not there when the child comes home from nursery?
- the key worker as a significant adult is not in the setting one day and the individual routines or rituals are not then in place?
- a friend decides to play with someone else to his exclusion?
- he feels he always has to behave in a certain way and not be as he would really like to be, or he finds the rules are different from home. For example, he is encouraged to be curious and touch objects; whereas at home objects are not for touching, not to be got dirty or covered in paint as 'I will get into trouble'.

***It matters how children feel about themselves. Do they feel confident enough to persevere through difficulties?***

***Are they learning to view themselves as individuals valued by others?***

***Children's feelings about themselves will be intertwined in the unfolding of their development, including their ability to put their feelings and thoughts into words.***[1]

[1] Lindon, J., *Child Development from Birth to Eight: A Practical Focus*, London: National Children's Bureau, 1993





BEST COPY AVAILABLE

**Supporting emotions**

The young child shows happy emotions that can sometimes result in over-exuberance.

How does your setting support the exuberant and excited child who may well express his emotions and excitement by rushing in and wanting attention, and who wants to talk about a caravan or show Gran everything in the nursery at high speed.

How does your setting support the overexcited child who knows Dad is coming home from the oil rigs, and who gets overexcited and does not settle because he knows Dad will be coming to collect him? His play and actions are unsettled, he is noisy in his play and he keeps asking what time it is.

Educators will need to handle the excited child sensitively so that he is supported in his excitement but is also helped to remember others.

How does your setting support the individual child as he develops emotionally and copes with disruptions and changes in his life?

The young child is a person with feelings and emotions, just like the adults in his life. The contrasting emotions need sensitive and informed adult support.

Sometimes adults, in the busyness of life, forget the feelings and emotions of the child.

***Adults should respect children's feelings, taking them seriously and never claiming to know better than children themselves how they feel.***[1]

The young child can feel great happiness and excitement as well as sadness or emotional hurt. They can read a great deal into signals from the main carer, for example: 'Mummy did not kiss me today when she left' or 'Mummy did not flash the lights of the car today when she left me at Gran's'. Parting is important and a young child picks up signals even though the adult may not have intended anything by the omission.

Young children show emotions in different ways. Emotions are represented through:

- behaviour such as jumping with excitement, constant chattering and attention seeking ('come and see', etc.)
- behaviour such as hiding under or behind curtains or people, or getting dressed up and having a hood up or sunglasses on
- their drawings and paintings
- their creations with small-world play
- solitary play, wanting to be alone
- (sometimes) 'aggression in their play' and towards others.

[1] Lindon, J., *Child Development from Birth to Eight: A Practical Focus*. London: National Children's Bureau, 1993

These emotions are not easy to handle sometimes, and on reflection educators may feel that they could have handled a situation better. This is an important reflection, but perhaps what is more important is the reminder that if an adult and child have had a disagreement, the adult may still feel annoyed long after the child has moved on to another event'.[14]

Lindon emphasises the need for the adults to deal with the situation at the time and not to 'hark back to it'.

> *Part of a positive acceptance of children is making sure as an adult that you focus on children's behaviour and help them to keep the ups and downs of everyday life separate from a positive view of themselves. Sometimes children will be told off. Adults may criticise the behaviour, but must leave a child secure in the belief that he or she is liked and accepted as a person.*
>
> Lindon, J., *Child Development from Birth to Eight: A Practical Focus*, London: National Children's Bureau, 1993

Kirsty is reacting to hearing that Granny has died: she cannot accept that this could happen and that Granny will not be there for her party.

She has made an invitation for Granny to come to her party and is now scribbling all over it. She then goes to the sand with some play-people, makes a cake, adds sticks for candles, places the play-people round the cake and then takes one out and buries her in the sand.

All the time she is talking away, sometimes in her movement showing anger and disbelief. She looks over occasionally at an adult and makes some eye contact. Then she goes to the book corner with her cuddly friend and curls up, thumb in mouth, turning the pages of a book.

**What does this tell us about Kirsty?**

- It tells us she is confused and hurt. She is trying to work out what has happened to Granny and is hurt that Granny cannot now be at her party, which is what she can relate to.
- She represents her feelings in different ways. She is showing that she needs time to work this through alone, although she knows that she is being watched by a caring adult.
- She also knows that she will be allowed to represent her feelings in a safe environment.
- She knows that the adults understand she needs her own space and time to cope with and express her feelings and emotions.

[14] Lindon, J., *Child Development from Birth to Eight: A Practical Focus*, London: National Children's Bureau, 1993

Gura explains this well when she discusses children's need for 'space'.

> *Chesters advised that children should get their break from coping through activities like hammering nails into wood and fists into clay, painting and drawing, make believe, sand and water play, constructing and deconstructing with blocks. This was not an appeal for children to be allowed to escape from the world temporarily but of their right to 'space' in which to experience being in control.*
>
> Gura, P., *Resources for Early Learning: Children Adults and Stuff*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1996

**Have you thought of resourcing your centre with:**

- cosy, safe places where a child can be alone?
- adults with whom a child can share his feelings and emotions and who have time to sit and talk and listen and share a book?
- small-world materials that the upset child can use to express feelings?
- malleable materials like dough or clay that can be formed and reformed as need be?
- little objects that can be played with or cuddly toys that can be taken for a walk round the setting?
- a space where there is a soft cushion for lying on, and to be alone and at peace with oneself in?
- a space where there is a soft cushion for lying on, and where, if need be, a child can 'hit out' at the cushion?
- a sensory area inside and outside where peace and calm can be felt?

***Feelings are not simply discharged into materials but used to transform them.***[15]

Through the *ethos* of the setting do you show each child and parent/carer that:

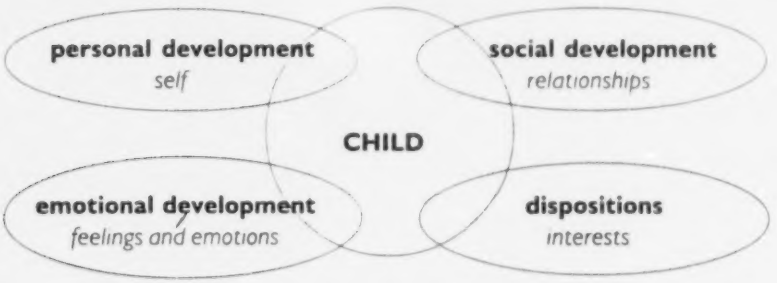
- an upset child will be safe, understood and supported
- feelings and emotions are talked about with children as a group and individually
- books are used to help the young child cope with changes and disruptions
- small-world play is an important vehicle for expressing feelings and emotions
- educators spend time listening and giving explanations to the child and being open about what has happened
- it is understood that children cannot be set the unrealistic goal of 'continuously demonstrating good behaviour' and that it is natural that on some days children will not behave as well or as considerately as on other days.

[15] Gura, P. *Resources for Early Learning: Children, Adults and Staff*. London: Hodder and Soughton, 1996

### Discussion for teams

As a team discuss:

- how much you know about the children and families in your setting
- whether you would be able to access information if you had an upset child
- whether your relationships with parents/carers/families are such that you could find out why a child's behaviour has changed
- whether you and the team are building in time to discuss observations and have strategies to support a child who is upset
- how you would ask for and give information about the child to the parent/carer
- who else you might ask for information to help the family.




## Dispositions

When we think of dispositions we are concerned with the young child's consistent representation of his:

- interests
- intellectual 'concerns'
- materials and resources that he or she is confident with and returns to
- attitudes to self and others.

**Have you thought about how, where and when the young child begins to show educators:**

- what he is really interested in?
- what he seems to pursue?
- what resources or materials he uses with confidence and returns to?
- how he views himself and others and how this affects his attitude to learning and to living?

**You might also be thinking:**

- what is a disposition?
- where has this word come from?
- what is it related to?

### Current thinking

Katz[16] offers a tentative definition of what a disposition is. 'A disposition is a tendency to exhibit frequently, consciously and voluntarily a pattern of behaviour that is directed towards a broad goal.'

When you support a child's disposition it is important to 'connect the disposition to children's developing sense of who they are and what they can do'.[17]

[16] Katz, L., 'Dispositions as Educational Goals', *ERIC Digest*, (September) 1993

[17] Annings, A. and Edwards, A., *Promoting Children's Learning from Birth to Five*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999

Annings and Edwards link a disposition with *personal identity* – the who of learning – by explaining:

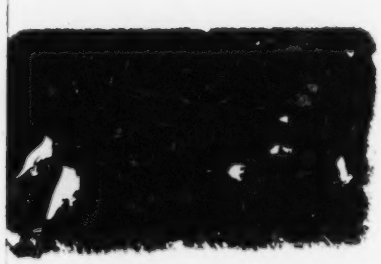
> *if a child's identity includes a belief that she is good with number then she will find herself attracted to number activities*
>
> and
>
> *... if a child has a capacity to see mathematics as sets of patterns then the child will seek out the patterns in learning opportunities provided.*
>
> *In other words she will have a disposition to engage with aspects of mathematics available in the experience provided for her.*
>
> Annings, A. and Edwards, A., *Promoting Children's Learning from Birth to Five*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999

If dispositions are 'rooted in our sense of our likely effectiveness' then educators need to be ready to assist this development through 'careful and sensitive support while children acquire the capabilities and understandings which will underpin their effectiveness'.

> Young children do have interests like Jamie, who loves cars and has built up a considerable collection of toy cars and who will become involved with any book or story or play situation to do with cars. He loves the car magazines that the nursery team have put in the library for him and talks about cars to his friends. A visit to the local garage resulted in Jamie and his friends becoming mechanics in the block play/construction area.

Through his interest and knowledge, Jamie has also learned to be socially disposed, because to have any excitement with cars you need friends to play with.

> *Physical objects, apparatus and materials provide important sources of social contact between young children and between children and adults. They offer a common currency and provide shared reference points.*
>
> Gura, P., *Resources for Early Learning: Children Adults and Stuff*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1996



Lindon supports this thinking, stating:

> *learning is supported by materials and activities which are appropriate for their interests as well as their abilities. Children's attention is held by activities that build on and extend their interests.*
>
> Lindon, J., *Child Development from Birth to Eight: A Practical Focus*, London: National Children's Bureau, 1993

Continuity of learning needs consistency. The young child needs to know how the adults will respond and react so that he can discuss or share a concern or excitement. The young child needs to know that routines will stay the same and that some of the materials provided in the nursery will be there the next day and be the same. This gives a child security and confidence. He can also plan what he is going to do the next day: he can follow through his current schema.

Observant educators will respond to and support the 'concerns' of the child, furthering his 'threads of thinking'. Through the pursuit of a schema, the young child will be showing how he is making sense of the world in which he lives.

Dispositions are connected to a child's cognitive development and are often seen in the child who happily and enthusiastically constructs his own meaning, and indeed his own curriculum. Only by supporting and engaging with a child's thinking and reasoning will educators know what sense a child is making of the world and how he is doing it.

> Callum is fascinated by wheels and what they do, the marks they make and how wheels actually turn. He searches through books the nursery team has provided and spends time every day taking the trucks and diggers through the wet sand, round and round the sand tray, building ramps and ledges for the trucks to go up and over.
>
> He uses junk to try to build trucks with wheels, looking for objects that will turn. He also says 'round and round' whilst turning his body or objects in space. He takes the hands of other children and birls round with them. He plays with cogs and wheels in the water and sand, turning them over and over.

***They need to know that something they begin today will be there for them to complete or add to tomorrow.***[18]

He works on this schema on his own, but will involve any visitor to the nursery in his schema.

**What does this tell you about Callum?**

- We have a picture of a child as researcher, searching for meaning. He is intrinsically motivated.
- He thinks and plans and is using his cognitive powers.
- It tells you he is on a circular schema, but that he is also knowledgeable about wheels and what they do.
- He is interested in how wheels work and tries to select appropriate material when he is making things.
- He does not always relate to his peers but seems to relate better to adults.
- He also knows how to engage adults in his interest. This means he has

[18] Annings, A. and Edwards, A., *Promoting Learning from Birth to Five*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

learned how to build relationships for his purpose.

> Trisha and Suzie love dressing up and every day they come into the playgroup and rush to the dressing-up area. They chat to each other and are seen to plan what they are going to do that day. They bring the mirror into the area and get dressed up as dancers, asking the educators for the music tapes and the ballet dresses. Friends can come in to watch 'their performance'.

**What does this tell you about Trisha and Suzie?**

- They are confident and secure.
- They rely on the dressing-up area being there every day – they expect it to be there.
- They seem to have a plan and it sounds as if one of them is interested in ballet.
- They are protective of their area and set the rules for others to come into their play.
- The play well together and share the same ideas and interests.
- They may need support in involving others and in developing their social interactions with others.

***Cooperative learning is an intervention in children's learning to promote both academic and social skills.***[19]

**Have you thought about planning and resourcing the space so that:**

- there is time and space for children to develop and pursue their interests, and to extend and deepen their understandings?
- you have sets of resources to respond to the interests of the children, feed their interests and to support them in their enquiries and investigations?
- the environment is interesting and motivating for enquiring children, organised and laid out to foster social interactions and enquiry?
- educators engage with the children and their interests, follow the children's interests, help children to involve others in their play, support children in making relationships and help children choose so that they see themselves as being effective?
- educators are careful not to impose their own thinking on the child's?

**Have you thought about planning time:**

- for observing and tracking individual children's interests and concerns?
- to share and discuss observations?
- to share and discuss with the main carer/parents?
- to involve the children in making decisions about what they need and would like to have in their playgroup or nursery?

Do you have a planning system that is open-ended and flexible to allow educators to be responsive to individuals?

[19] Hill, S., 'Cooperative Learning and Play: What's in it for Children?', *Early Years*, 16(2), (spring) 1996

**Discussion for teams**

As a team discuss:

- your understandings of dispositions
- how you foster dispositions
- following children's schemas, what you do now
- implications for observations and planning.

## SECTION THREE: CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Working with young children poses its challenges and inspirations. New arrivals are coming into new and strange places that are not quite like home. There are more children and for some that can be like walking into a crowd. Young children can feel lost in that crowd and their growth and adjustment into the routines and pace of the setting can only be:

> *assisted where there are secure, warm and caring relationships, where praise is given appropriately and where a sense of humour is encouraged. Feeling safe, confident and good about themselves is necessary in its own right. It is also necessary if children are to learn effectively.*
>
> *A Curriculum Framework for Children 3 to 5*, Scottish CCC, 1999

Educators must be prepared for the less developmentally mature child. The atmosphere and rhythm of the day can totally change as children adjust.

Educators have to support and extend the children who are developmentally mature and settled while also supporting those who are exploring a new environment with vigour and causing what might seem like havoc in a once-settled environment.

**What does this mean for the educators?**

It means:

- adjusting and redefining the pace and routines of the day
- adjusting team responsibilities
- giving more thought to all aspects to ensure individual needs are provided for
- rethinking the organisation of the setting
- reorganising groups for story-time and having smaller groups for finger rhymes and nursery rhymes
- planning and providing for the range of development in terms of space and resources
- being prepared for changes in behaviour of some children when new children appear
- some children may regress in their behaviour if not supported.

These statements by practitioners are supported by *A Curriculum Framework for Children 3 to 5*.

> *While young children need an environment that balances familiar and predictable routines with challenge and surprises, their confidence in coping with new experiences needs to be supported by adults who offer emotional support, praise and encouragement.*
>
> *A Curriculum Framework for Children 3 to 5*, Scottish CCC, 1999

Through appropriate play opportunities, the young child will develop personally, socially and emotionally.

> *Play is essential for the healthy growth and successful development of young human beings. Play is central to all young children's learning, from babies in the first few months of life, through to children of statutory school age and beyond.*
>
> Early Childhood Education Forum, *Quality in Diversity in Early Learning*, London: National Children's Bureau, 1998

Play supports the foundations for early learning, enabling the child to:

- belong and make connections
- be and become
- contribute and participate
- be active and express self
- think, imagine and develop his understanding of the world he lives in.[20]

These foundations underpin the personal, social and emotional development of the child. For the young child to achieve the goals within these foundations for early learning, the ethos of the setting must be supportive for both the child and the parents/carers.

Reflecting on the ethos of your setting and your contribution to the ethos using the challenging questions put forward by Katz,[21] how do you think it feels from the child's viewpoint?

**Bottom-up perspective**

- Do I usually feel welcome rather than captured?
- Do I belong rather than just function as one of the crowd?
- Am I usually accepted and understood rather than overlooked or scolded by the adults?
- Am I usually glad to be here, rather than eager to leave?

**Outside–inside perspective (from the parent's/carer's viewpoint)**

Are our relationships:

- primarily respectful, rather than patronising or controlling?
- accepting, open, inclusive and tolerant rather than rejecting, blaming and prejudiced?

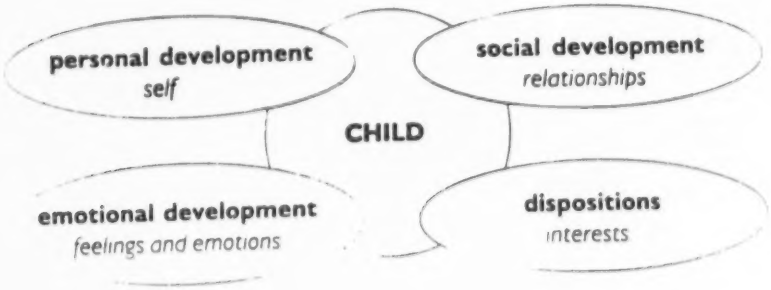
[20] Early Childhood Education Forum, *Quality in Diversity in Early Learning*, London: National Children's Bureau, 1998

[21] Katz, L., 'Dispositions as Educational Goals', *ERIC Digest*, (September) 1993

# SECTION FOUR: WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

This section gives you and your colleagues the opportunity to think about your centre and your day-to-day practices. At the end of each section, points for discussion have been identified.

As a staff team you might now want to use some of these questions to focus your discussion and to decide where you are as a team with the issues that are central to this document.




## Childhood

As a team discuss:

- how you view the child
- what you see as childhood
- what you value about the child and childhood
- how you see the future of children
- how your views on childhood affect the curriculum you offer the children
- how you feel about encouraging children to construct their own theories about life without imposing the 'correct' or 'adult' understanding.

## Personal development

As a team:

- discuss self-concept and self-esteem
  - how do you identify a child's level of self-esteem? Self-esteem can be high or low and can fluctuate between the two
  - how do you support the children at present?
- discuss and think about the statements or phrases you use when you are interacting with children
- identify how and when you give children responsibility
- discuss how the amount of responsibility you give relates or does not relate to the age of the child.





BEST COPY AVAILABLE

## Social development

As a team discuss:

- how you help children settle and become part of a group
- in what way the layout of the setting supports social development
- how the routine of the day may affect children's social behaviour
- the strategies already in place and decide on others that may be worth considering
- the access and space you give children inside and outside to move and develop and to socialise in.

## Emotional development

As a team discuss:

- how you find out about the background of each child and his family circumstances
- which professionals you (could) tap into to find out more information
- how you support each family in your setting to allow for maximum adjustments to take place for the child and the main carer
- how you set up liaison with other support agencies who may have valuable information about the child and family.

## Dispositions

As a team discuss:

- your understandings of dispositions
- how you foster dispositions
- following children's schemas, what you do now
- implications for observations and planning.

You may also wish to relate your discussions to:

- p. 2 (Introduction: Principles) of *Learning is Magic: Supporting Adults in Assessing Children's Progress 3 to 5*, Scottish CCC, 2000, which includes:
  - Activity 1: Observation and asse nent during staff interaction
  - Activity 3: Two boys sharing a book/environment
  - Activity 4: Hopscotch
  - Activity 10: Reporting Jonathan discussion
  - Activity 13: Planning for individual needs
  - Activity 14: 'Wiggly woo'

- the performance indicators described in *The Child at the Centre: Self Evaluation in the Early Years*, SEED, 2000:
  - 2.1: *Children's progress in their development and learning*
  - 3.1: *Quality of children's development and learning through play*
  - 3.2: *Staff–child interaction*
  - 5.1: *Ethos*
  - 5.2: *Equality and fairness*.

## FURTHER READING

*The Child at the Centre: Self Evaluation in the Early Years – Performance Indicators*, SEED, 2000

Dahlberg, G., Moss, P. and Pence, A., *Beyond Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care: Postmodern Perspectives*, London: Falmer Press, 1999

Dowling, M., *Young Children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development*, London: Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd, 2000

Eisenberg, N., *The Caring Child*, Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992

Griffin, B., 'The child should feel good enough: nurturing a sense of self in young children', chapter 2 in Abbott, L. and Moylett, H., *Working with the under 3s: responding to children's needs*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1997

Hill, S., 'Cooperative Learning and Play: What's in it for Children?' *Early Years*, 16(2), (spring) 1996

Lindon, J., *Child Development from Birth to Eight: A Practical Focus*, London: National Children's Bureau, 1993

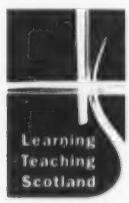
Lindon, J., *Working with Young Children*, 3rd edn, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1997

Marsh, C., 1995 cited in Elfer, P., 1996, 'Building Intimacy in Relationships with Young Children in Nurseries', *Early Years*, 16(2), (spring) 1996

Nutbrown, C., *Threads of Thinking*, London: Paul Chapman Publishing, 1994

Rinaldi, C. Reggio Emilia Talk, London, October 1999

S. Spaggiari (ed.), *The Fountain*, Reggio Emilia Italia, 1995




**Learning and Teaching Scotland, Gardyne Road, Dundee DD5 1NY Tel: 01382 443600 Fax: 01382 443645/6**

Learning and Teaching Scotland, 74 Victoria Crescent Road, Glasgow G12 9JN Tel: 0141 337 5000 Fax: 0141 337 5050

**www.LTScotland.com e: enquiries@LTScotland.com**

**Price: £3.50**